



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
HEADQUARTERS AND SUPPORT BATTALION
MARINE CORPS BASE
CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA 92055-5031

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1650
HADJ
7 JUN 13

HEADQUARTERS AND SUPPORT BATTALION POLICY LETTER 2-13

From: Commanding Officer
To: Distribution List

Subj: BATTALION AWARDS GUIDANCE

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 1650.1H
(b) MCO 1650.19J
(c) MCO 7042.6C
(d) MCICOMO 1650.1
(e) MCIWEST-MCB CAMPENO 1650.1

Encl: (1) Registering with the Improved Awards Processing System (IAPS)
(2) Procedures for creating and submitting awards via IAPS
(3) Personal Awards Standards
(4) Types of Awards

1. All personal award recommendations from the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal and higher will be submitted to the Battalion Adjutant via the IAPS; the 3 Company Command Decks shall also be in the routing process for all awards & commendatory correspondence that require my approval/endorsement/signature. All Certificates of Commendation shall be forwarded to the Battalion Adjutant- -via your Company Command Deck- -in an email as a word document attachment. The Battalion Adjutant's office will review each award recommendation for completeness and accuracy prior to forwarding to the Battalion Commander for approval.
2. Compliance to this policy and the references will ensure deserving Marines and Sailors are presented their award prior to her or his detachment date from this Battalion. My end state is that every member of our unit who departs under favorable/honorable conditions shall receive something tangible for their performance.
3. This policy cancels H&S Bn Policy Letter 1-08 dated 1 Sep 08.

SEMPER FIDELIS,

Michael E. Cordero

MICHAEL E. CORDERO
COLONEL USMC

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Registering with the IAPS

1. Registering with the IAPS

a. To register in IAPS, registrants must use their common access card to log on to: <https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/iaps>

b. The first time you log into IAPS, the page will display IAPS Welcome & Registration.

c. Enter your billet in the Title box. IAPS will automatically put this title into the signature block when it generates awards forms.

d. To complete the Unit Identifier block, click the search button and find Headquarters and Support Battalion, Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton. Click the button next to the unit name, then click select.

e. The registration process is now completed.

Procedure for creating and submitting awards via IAPS

1. Creating a New Award

a. To create an award via IAPS, the award's originator must be a commissioned officer or Civilian Marine (GS-9 or above) authorized to originate awards. The originator will log on to: <https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/iaps>.

b. Click on the create award box. Select an award from the drop-down box. Note: Although personal awards are not to be recommended for the purposes of specific ranks, a reasonable guide to follow is: Legion of Merit Medals are normally awarded to Commanding Generals, Installation Commanders, Chiefs of Staff, Command Sergeants Major, etc. for extraordinary performance of service. Meritorious Service Medals are normally awarded to Navy Captains, Colonels, Lieutenant Colonels, Chief Warrant Officers 5, Sergeants Major, and Master Gunnery Sergeants. Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals are normally awarded to Navy Lieutenant Commanders, Majors, Captains, Chief Warrant Officers 2 to 4, First Sergeants, Master Sergeants and Gunnery Sergeants. Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals are normally awarded to Navy Lieutenants, Captains, and below for Marine officers and Staff Sergeants and Noncommissioned Officers for enlisted.

c. Enter the nominee's person's social security number in the SSN box, or check the foreign box.

d. Select the nominee's service from the drop-down box.

e. Click on the "From" calendar and select the beginning date of the action. Afterwards, click on the "To" calendar and select the ending date of the action. Click submit, when done.

f. After clicking submit, the IAPS will auto-populate the nominee's personal information from the Marine Corps Total Force System (MCTFS).

g. Information Blocks not auto-populated by MCTFS may easily be filled out by the originator since it is self-explanatory.

h. The originator will click the summary of action button to write the nominee's accomplishments that justifies consideration for the recommended award. Since each award recommendation is evaluated on the merits of the justification, this part of the recommendation is required for all award submissions. Although reference (a) authorizes bullet format summary, to ensure the merits of justification are clear and precise, paragraph style is highly encouraged to be used. The SOA is the most important element of the award recommendation. The recommendation is

evaluated on the merits of the justification contained in enclosure (3). Avoid using generalities, excessive superlatives, and the "job description approach." Present an objective summary; give specific examples of the performance, manner of accomplishing it, and the results and benefits derived. It must be error free, i.e. spelling, punctuation, grammar, sentence structure, and not written in all capitalization. The emphasis should be on performance of responsibilities and specific accomplishments that set the individual apart from their peers. The amount of detail and supporting documentation required will depend upon the circumstances and the nature of the award recommendation.

i. The originator will click the citation button to write the award citation. A proposed citation is a condense version of the summary of action. It must be concise and highlight the most exceptional examples of the individual's outstanding performance. The following "Opening" and "Closing" sentences, by awards, are mandatory:

1. Legion of Merit (LM)

Opening: FOR EXCEPTIONALLY MERITORIOUS CONDUCT IN THE PERFORMANCE OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET), HEADQUARTERS AND SUPPORT BATTALION, MARINE CORPS INSTALLATIONS WEST-MARINE CORPS BASE, CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA, FROM (MONTH AND YEAR) TO (MONTH AND YEAR).

Closing: BY HIS/HER DYNAMIC DIRECTION, KEEN JUDGEMENT, AND LOYAL DEVOTION TO DUTY, (RANK AND LAST NAME) REFLECTED GREAT CREDIT UPON HIMSELF/HERSELF AND UPHELD THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE.

2. Meritorious Service Medal (MSM)

Opening: FOR OUTSTANDING MERITORIOUS SERVICE OR ACHIEVEMENT WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET), HEADQUARTERS AND SUPPORT BATTALION, MARINE CORPS INSTALLATIONS WEST-MARINE CORPS BASE, CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA, FROM (MONTH AND YEAR) TO (MONTH AND YEAR).

Closing: (RANK AND LAST NAME)'S EXECPTIONAL PROFESSIONALISM, PERSONAL INITIATIVE, AND LOYAL DEVOTION TO DUTY REFLECTED GREAT CREDIT UPON HIM/HER AND WERE IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE.

3. Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (NMCCM)

Opening: MERITORIOUS SERVICE OR MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET), HEADQUARTERS AND SUPPORT BATTALION, MARINE CORPS INSTALLATIONS WEST-MARINE CORPS BASE, CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA, FROM (MONTH AND YEAR) TO (MONTH AND YEAR).

ENCLOSURE (2)

Closing: BY HIS/HER ENTHUSIASM, PROFESSIONALISM, AND UNWAVERING DEVOTION TO DUTY, (RANK AND LAST NAME) UPHELD THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE.

4. Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (NMCAM)

Opening: PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET), HEADQUARTERS AND SUPPORT BATTALION, MARINE CORPS INSTALLATIONS WEST-MARINE CORPS BASE, CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA, FROM (MONTH AND YEAR) TO (MONTH AND YEAR).

Closing: (RANK AND LAST NAME)'S EXCEPTIONAL PROFESSIONALISM, UNRELENTING PERSISTENCE, AND LOYAL DEVOTION TO DUTY REFLECTED GREAT CREDIT UPON HIM/HER AND WERE IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE.

NOTE: All recommended awards involving retirement will include the following sentence before the closing sentence:

HIS/HER SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE OF DUTY DURING THIS TOUR IS THE HALLMARK OF A CAREER DEVOTED TO ACCOMPLISHING BROAD AND DIVERSE TASKS IN COMBAT AND PEACE (EXCLUDE IF NO COMBAT) HIGHLIGHTING THE CULMINATION OF (INSERT NUMBER OF YEARS) YEARS OF HONORABLE AND FAITHFUL SERVICE. Then the closing sentence.

5. Certificate of Commendation

Opening: EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE OF HIS/HER DUTIES WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET), HEADQUARTERS AND SUPPORT BATTALION, MARINE CORPS INSTALLATIONS WEST-MARINE CORPS BASE, CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA, FROM (MONTH AND YEAR) TO (MONTH AND YEAR). (RANK AND LAST NAME) PERFORMED HIS/HER DUTIES IN AN EXEMPLARY AND HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL MANNER.

Closing: (RANK AND LAST NAME)'S EXCEPTIONAL PROFESSIONAL ABILITY, INITIATIVE AND LOYAL DEVOTION TO DUTY REFLECTED GREAT CREDIT UPON HIMSELF/HERSELF AND WERE IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE.

6. Meritorious Mast

Opening: DURING THIS PERIOD OF (MONTH AND YEAR) THROUGH (MONTH AND YEAR), (RANK AND LAST NAME) PERFORMED HIS/HER DEMANDING DUTIES IN AN OUTSTANDING MANNER WHILE SERVING AS (BILLET), HEADQUARTERS AND SUPPORT BATTALION, MARINE CORPS INSTALLATIONS WEST-MARINE CORPS BASE, CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA.

Closing: (RANK AND LAST NAME)'S DEDICATION TO DUTY AND PROFESSIONALISM REFLECTED CREDIT UPON HIM/HER, THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE.

ENCLOSURE (2)

j. Click the routing button after completing the nominee's personal information, summary of action, and citation. Choose one option from endorser, reviewer, or unit awards administrator to identify the next person in your chain of command who must take action on the award. Select the next person and click submit. Award recommendations via iAPS will be forwarded to the Battalion Commander, via the Company Commander and Battalion Adjutant, for approval consideration.

k. Endorsers and reviewers can review the award, make comments, select a recommended award and forward the award to the unit awards administrator for review prior to the Battalion Commander's review.

1. During the routing of the award, originators may track and keep abreast of updates by clicking the Alert box and selecting to view either pending users or awarding authorities.

2. Administrative Procedures. Once the award has made it to the unit awards administrator, the battalion awards clerk will process the award for review through the awards chain: Battalion Adjutant, Battalion Sergeant Major, Battalion Executive Officer, and Battalion Commanding Officer.

3. H&S Bn Awards Board. The battalion's awards board consists of the company commander, Executive Officer, Sergeant Major, and Adjutant. These members will review all personal award recommendations submitted via the IAPS. Within two working days of receiving an award recommendation, these members will concur or not concur, provide comments and/or recommendations to the battalion commanding officer for each personal award submission.

4. Timeliness. A timely award's recommendation is essential to a successful awards system. A recommendation must be submitted as soon as possible following the act, achievement or service upon which it is based. However, all recommendations must be appropriately justified and sufficiently detailed. Personal awards will be submitted to Battalion Commanding Officer in sufficient time for processing to be completed PRIOR to the member's departure from the Battalion. Keep in mind that compliance with timelines ensures the award will be processed promptly via the chain of command in ample time for presentation to the member. Late submitted awards will require detailed comments by the originator and recommending endorser explaining why the award is submitted late. Late submission comments will be made in the iAPS comment's block. Additionally, the below awards must arrive to the Battalion Adjutant within the following timeline. To preclude stagnation and unnecessary overload to iAPS, early submission or warehousing awards months in advance is not authorized.

AwardPrior to Presentation Timeline

Legion of Merit Medal	150 days
Meritorious Service Medal	90 days
Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal	30 days
Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal	30 days
Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal	30 days
Certificate of Commendation, Meritorious Mast	15 days

5. Work Division Leaders. On or about the 1st day of each month, work division leaders will submit a awards roster to the battalion adjutant via their company commander. The roster will identify Marines and Sailors projected to transfer or separate from the battalion within 180 days. The following example format applies (sort by departure date):

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Depart Date</u>	<u>Depart Reason</u>	<u>Rec Award</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Smith, John	MSgt	10 Aug 13	Retire	MSM	In IAPS
Pope, Jan	1stLt	18 Sep 13	PCSO	NC	IAPS Pend
Biggs, Ian	Cpl	9 Sep 13	EAS	None	2 NJPs

6. Awards and Official Military Personnel File (OMPF). The Military Awards Branch (MMMA) arranges for a copy of a Marine's iAPS approved summary of action and citation to be inserted in a Marine's OMPF. Marines awarded Certificates of Commendation, Meritorious Mast, and Letters of Appreciation must forward copies of their award to the Personnel Management Support Branch (MMSB). Marines may contact the Battalion Adjutant for assistance or forwarding a copy of their award to:

Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps (MMSB-20)
2008 Elliot Road
Quantico, VA 22134

7. Fleet Hometown News Release. Fleet hometown news is designed to provide media customers recent information about news worthy events. Marines and Sailors presented awards will report to the battalion adjutant to complete a Fleet Hometown News Release form.

ENCLOSURE (2)

Personal Awards Standards

1. Legion of Merit (LM)

a. Eligibility requirements. Awarded to individuals who distinguish themselves by exceptionally meritorious conduct in performing outstanding service.

b. Justification. To justify this decoration, the service rendered must have been comparable to that required for the Distinguished Service Medal but in a duty of lesser though considerable responsibility. In general, the LM will be awarded to senior officers and senior staff noncommissioned officers who have performed such exceptionally meritorious service as to justify the award of the Distinguished Service Medal except as to degree of merit. However, this should not be interpreted to preclude the award of the LM to any individual, regardless of grade, whose acts of service rendered, although meritorious, is not sufficient to warrant the award of the LM. In these cases, the Meritorious Service Medal should be considered.

2. Meritorious Service Medal (MSM)

a. Eligibility requirements. Awarded to individuals who distinguish themselves by outstanding meritorious achievement or service.

b. Justification. To justify this decoration, the acts or services rendered by an individual, regardless of grade, must have been comparable to that required for the LM, but in a duty of lesser responsibility. When the degree of meritorious achievement or service rendered is not sufficient to warrant the award of MSM, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, when appropriate, should be considered.

3. Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (NMCCM). Awarded to an individual for heroic or meritorious achievement or service. To merit this award, the acts or services must be accomplished or performed in a manner above that normally expected and sufficient to distinguish the individual above those performing similar services as set forth in the following:

a. For Acts of Heroism. Worthy of special recognition, but not to the degree required for the Bronze Star Medal when combat is involved or the Navy and Marine Corps Medal when combat is not involved.

b. For Meritorious Achievement. Outstanding and worthy of special recognition, but not to the degree required for the Bronze

Star Medal or Air Medal when combat is involved or the Meritorious Service Medal or Air Medal when combat is not involved. The achievement should be as such to constitute a definite contribution to the Naval Service, such as an invention or improvement in design, procedure or organization.

c. For Meritorious Service. Outstanding and worthy of special recognition, but not to the degree required for the Bronze Star Medal or Air Medal when combat is involved or the Meritorious Service Medal or Air Medal when combat is not involved. The award may cover an extended period of time during which a higher award may have been recommended or received for specific act(s). The criteria, however, should not be the period of service involved, but rather the circumstances and conditions under which the service was performed. The performance should be well above that usually expected of an individual commensurate with their grade, and above that degree of excellence which can be appropriately reflected in the individual's fitness report, or service records.

4. Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (NMCAM). Awarded to individuals for meritorious service or achievement, based on sustained performance or specific achievement of a superlative nature, and shall be of such merit as to warrant more tangible recognition than is possible by a fitness report, but which does not warrant a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal or higher.

a. Professional achievement which merits the award must:

(1) Clearly exceed that which is normally required or expected, considering the individual's grade or rate, training, and experience.

(2) Made an important contribution of benefit to the United States and the Naval Service.

b. Leadership achievement which merits the award must:

(1) Be noteworthy.

(2) Be sustained so as to demonstrate a high state of development or, if for a specific achievement, be of such merit as to earn singular recognition for the act(s).

(3) Reflect most creditably on the efforts of the individual toward the accomplishment of the unit's mission.

ENCLOSURE (3)

Types of Awards

1. End of Tour Awards. Award recommendations that coincide with the termination of a duty assignment require specific examples of superior accomplishments. The termination of a duty assignment should not routinely give rise to an award recommendation. End of tour awards should be a reflection of the individual's sustained superior performance of duty while a member of the command.
2. Retirement Awards. Too often, individuals retiring or transferring to the Fleet Reserve are not given due recognition. Properly supported award recommendations that coincide with retirement of a Marine are generally viewed favorable. The proposed citation and summary of action must focus on the present duty. Retirement and/or transfer to the Fleet Marine Corps Reserve are significant milestones at which an individual's recent performance should be evaluated per established awards criteria as outlined in enclosure (3). In making a judgment regarding the level of special recognition, the magnitude of the achievement, and the level or responsibility are pertinent factors that must be considered. There are no provisions in the awards systems for personal decorations based solely on accumulated years of service.
3. Impact Awards. An impact award recognizes a meritorious act or achievement that is distinct from normal assigned duties and was accomplished during a period of 12 months or less. The merits and achievements contained in the impact award cannot be referenced in any other award encompassing the same period.

4. Other Awards

- a. Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal (MOVSM). The MOVSM may be awarded to members of the U.S. Armed Forces who subsequent to 31 December 1992, performed outstanding volunteer community service of a sustained, direct, and consequential nature. While no specific log of individual service is required by higher headquarters, a service member should perform a sustained, direct hands-on community service over a 3 year period and have written documentation to substantiate the specific community service. Members assigned to deploying units may include deployed time in the 3 year period. The MOVSM is intended to recognize exceptional community support over time and not a single act or achievement. For the purposes of this award, attending membership meetings or social events of a community service group or attending occasional scout meetings would normally not be considered qualifying service, while manning a community crisis action phone line or serving 3 years as a boy or girl scout leader would be considered qualifying service. To be awarded a MOVSM, the service member must be recommended by anyone senior to them. The recommendation must be submitted via the iAPS. Upon approval, a letter of authorization will be issued by the Battalion Commanding Officer (awarding authority) for presentation at the award ceremony.

ENCLOSURE (4)

b. Certificate of Commendation and Meritorious Mast. When the performance of an enlisted Marine or Sailor is considered noteworthy beyond the usual requirements of duty, the senior person who has observed the member's performance shall make a written report of this to the member's Company Commander. These reports shall be given careful consideration, and if appropriate a Certificate of Commendation or Meritorious Mast shall be drafted for consideration and approval. Company commanders may approve Meritorious Mast at the company level. Certificates of Commendation will only be approved by the Battalion Commanding Officer's approval.

c. Letter of Appreciation (LOA). **Any Commissioned officer senior to a Marine or Sailor, whose performance is considered noteworthy,** may issue a Letter of Appreciation via the member's company commanding officer for endorsement and presentation at the company level.

d. Battalion Medallions as Awards. Medallions, also known as "coins", may be awarded for significant individual accomplishments or improvement to mission readiness. The medallions will not be awarded as morale boosters, motivational items, or given as mementos to VIPs. An individual will not receive two medallions for the same accomplishment. When authorized for purchase by the Commanding General, the coins will contain the name of the Battalion. Coins purchased with an appropriated funding will not contain the name of any individual commander.

(1) Individual Accomplishments. Awarded by the Battalion Commander to individuals who had excelled in designated areas of competition related to the mission of the battalion. The following are examples of acceptable competition categories:

- (a) Marine and Marine NCO of the Quarter (8 coins per year)
- (b) High Rifle and Pistol Marksman (coins, as required)
- (c) Highest semi-annual male and female PFT/CFT score (4 coins per year)
- (d) Honor Graduate from Corporal Course (12 coins per year)
- (e) Honor Graduate from PME School (coins, as required)
- (f) Recipient of a USMC annual award (coins, as required)

(2) Mission Readiness Accomplishments. Awarded by the Battalion Commander to individuals who have achieved a significant accomplishment that resulted in improving the battalion's mission readiness. The following are examples of mission readiness accomplishment:

- (a) Contributed to a difficult or important project (coins, as required)
- (b) Improved the value of a program or service (coins, as required)
- (c) Made a procedure more efficient and economical (coins, as required)
- (d) Member of Color Guard or funeral detail (coins, as required)

ENCLOSURE (4)

e. Sustained Superior Performance and Letters of Continuity

(1) A letter of continuity will be submitted when an individual demonstrates a sustained period of superior performance and is reassigned within the command, or a change of reporting senior occurs. The letter of continuity will be prepared by the former reporting senior. The letter of continuity will be forwarded to the new reporting senior with an enclosed summary of action and proposed citation reflecting the Marine's commendable performance during the former duty assignment.

(2) If the sustained performance is maintained during the new assignment, the new reporting senior may recommend the individual for an award. The period of the award will include the periods recognized by both reporting seniors upon the individual's departure from the command or reassignment.

ENCLOSURE (4)